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PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATION
AS A BASIS
FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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by

ERNEST JOHN INGRAM

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate ways and means of developing public relations programs by local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association and the school staffs within their jurisdictions.

The investigation consisted of measurement and analysis of public attitudes toward education as a basis for public relations programs. In co-operation with two local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association and the centralized schools within their jurisdictions the writer administered the Brimacombe Attitude Scale to parents of grade four students in the co-operating units. The scale measured their attitudes towards costs, curriculum, the general value of education, discipline, and teacher education on a five point continuum. This instrument was administered to 403 parents in total.

When parents' collective attitude towards an area of the Brimacombe Scale was judged to be unfavorable the writer assumed such an attitude indicated a need for a specific type of public relations program. An analysis of the data indicated that the greatest need for public relations programs lay in the areas of "Costs" and "Discipline", in that order. After the survey data were analysed each co-operating unit selected, as a basis for its public relations program, an area of the Brimacombe Scale which received an unfavorable response from the sample surveyed.

The organizational structure in each co-operating unit consisted of a central planning committee to co-ordinate the program, a study or research committee to organize and conduct studies in the area of the Brimacombe Scale chosen for the program, and various sub-committees to plan and conduct specific public relations projects based upon the general program theme. The major sub-committees were; newsletter and publications, community liaison, and social. Some units also established Education Week sub-committees.

The study concluded after each participating unit had organized its public relations program. However, a continuation of the study is being conducted by the Alberta Teachers' Association to determine the effectiveness with which the programs were conducted and the effects of the programs on public attitudes.

This study accomplished two major objectives -- it developed a procedure for measuring and analysing public attitudes toward education, which can be used in the initial stages of planning a public relations program, and it developed an organizational structure for conducting public relations programs at the local association and school staff levels. However, the effectiveness of these procedures cannot be fully determined until the completion of the expanded study being conducted by the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Further studies, in depth, could be conducted to determine the effectiveness of different types of public relations projects in changing public attitudes toward education. Various organizational structures could be tested, as could the

attitudes of teachers toward organized public relations programs. Different methods of measuring public attitudes toward education could also be investigated.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Every product and service in our modern industrial and commercial society must compete for its fair share of public support. Education, similar to most other services in a democratic country, can only function properly if it has public recognition and support. Students of communication have long held the concept that people will not support a service they do not understand, or for which they see no need, but this concept is not fully accepted by educators (4. p. 35).

A recent survey of public relations and education activities in local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association revealed that only 58.18 per cent of the locals reporting had public relations committees, and only 30.91 per cent conducted active programs during the 1959-60 school year (1. p. 3). This is not a satisfactory record in view of the fact that the constitutions of most local associations call for the establishment of a public relations committee (2. p. 183). Policy of the Alberta Teachers' Association, established in 1952, also urges local associations to conduct public relations programs (3. p. 27). It must be admitted, however, that very little was done before 1958 to encourage and assist local associations establish

public relations programs. One conclusion drawn from the survey is that many teachers are not aware of the need for an organized public relations program at the local association and school staff level.

I. THE PROBLEM

The Major Problem. The major purpose of this study is to develop techniques of conducting public relations programs in local associations of The Alberta Teachers' Association, and in the school staffs within their jurisdictions.

Minor Problems. Minor problems include: (1) the measurement of public attitudes toward education, (2) the analysis of public attitudes toward education as a basis for public relations programs, and (3) the implementation of certain techniques of organizing and conducting public relations programs as outlined in the public relations literature.

II. ASSUMPTIONS

For the purpose of this study the following assumptions are made:

(1) Favourable public attitudes are necessary to ensure adequate moral and financial support for education.

(2) Public attitudes can be measured.

(3) The public attitude instrument used in this study is an acceptable measure of public attitudes toward education.

(4) The sample used to determine public attitudes toward education is typical of the larger Alberta population.

(5) The authorities used in determining the nature of the public relations programs are competent in their fields.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Public Relations. For the purpose of this study the term "public relations" refers to organized programs of activities aimed at developing a harmony of understanding and goodwill between the schools and the publics they serve. This definition is supported by Bortner:

School public relations is a long-range, solid and democratic course. It is a process which seeks to foster understanding and friendly working relationships between schools and their communities. It is an operation which helps schools know their communities in order that they may not only serve educational needs but also select more intelligently the media and activities which will keep the people informed about the schools, their purposes, programs, progress, and problems (7, p. 3).

Internal Relations. For the purpose of this study the term "internal relations" refers to the communications between professional educators aimed at developing improved understandings about and acceptance of group purposes. Internal relations involves inservice professional development

programs, aimed at increasing the professional competence of teachers while in service.

IV. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The units which participated in this study consisted of two local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association and the multi-room schools within their jurisdictions. One of the participating local associations has eight multi-room schools within its jurisdiction, one of which elected not to participate in the study. The other local association has four multi-room schools, all of which participated in the study.

The public attitudes survey, which formed the basis for the public relations programs, was given to one parent of each grade four pupil in the eleven participating schools.

The organized public relations programs were limited to local association and school staff levels. No effort was made to organize the public relations activities of individual teachers.

V. NEED FOR THE STUDY

The need for this study is based primarily on the general need for school public relations programs, and secondly, on the specific need for school public relations in Alberta. Bortner sums up the thinking of most authorities by outlining five needs for organized public relations

programs for education (7, pp. 4-5). According to Bortner, the schools are lawfully accountable to the public, therefore they are obliged to provide information on the way they are spending money, using the facilities, and educating children. Bortner believes this is the fundamental need for public relations. In outlining his second need, he states -- "The public school can succeed only to the extent that it holds the understanding, interest, and confidence of the people", (7, p. 5). Bortner believes that the interest, understanding and confidence of the people will not be kept at a high level unless educators make a conscious effort to keep it at a high level. A third need for school public relations discussed by Bortner has to do with the needs of pupils. The best interests of the pupils, he believes, can only be served by the co-operation of all elements of the community which affect their lives. Bortner also believes that widespread public support for education is necessary to resist strong pressure groups who would use the schools for their own purposes. According to Bortner the fifth need for public relations programs is to counter the feeling of disrespect for teachers and education in general, held by large elements of the public.

McCloskey's arguments concerning the need for educational public relations supports Bortner's second need (4, p. 35). According to McCloskey, a service will not be accepted or supported if the people do not see a need for

the service. This need must be in terms of their own wants and desires. If we want the public to support education at a high level, we must keep public interest high, and be prepared to take into account public wants, needs and desires. To accomplish this, a conscious, organized effort is necessary.

Yeager emphasizes the point that a school public relations program is a democratic right the public should expect (8, p. 10). This view supports the first need discussed by Bortner. If society is expected to set the aims of education and provide the necessary moral and financial support to make the fulfilment of these aims possible, society must be kept well informed of the needs of education and the effect different courses of action will have on the expressed aims.

In summarizing the needs for public relations, Harral had this to say:

To secure the understanding and support of the people in this competitive age, the schools must have not only a public relations policy but also a definite public relations program. Such a program can be a daily working function of every school, large or small. Even schools without large budgets, full-time workers, and elaborate facilities can enjoy increased public understanding by stressing sound services and procedures (9, p. 5).

Education in Alberta has, for a number of years, faced a series of continuing crises: a shortage of qualified teachers, a shortage of classrooms and equipment, low salaries and lack of prestige for teachers, and many other problems. These crises may be due in part to inadequate public relations for education.

A survey conducted for the Alberta Royal Commission on Education by E. J. Hanson revealed that Albertans spent 6 per cent of their personal income on education during the 1930's compared with only 3 per cent in 1959 (5, p. 337). Professor Hanson also made projections of educational expenditures over the next twenty years and estimated that by 1980 educational expenditures in Alberta will be three times the 1959 level, and will call for a contribution of 5 per cent of the personal income of Albertans. Hanson concluded that:

...With personal incomes at a level in 1980 about double that of 1959, and far above the subsistence levels of the 1930's, the means can be found to pay for the estimated school expenditures. It will be more a matter of willingness to pay for education than a matter of ability to do so (5. p. 337).

Albertans can and must support education at a higher level than is the case today, but will not do so unless they recognize the need (4, pp. 1-17).

During the last few years there has been a growing awareness of the importance of education to the welfare of our nation. With this awareness of the importance of education has developed an increased interest in what our schools are doing. The establishment of the Alberta Royal Commission on Education in 1957 is one indication of this increasing interest. Alberta educators have an excellent opportunity to take advantage of the present interest in education by informing the public of the needs of education and by seeking

their help and advice in building a sound educational system for the future. The Report of the Alberta Royal Commission on Education supports this view:

More broadly it can be said that educational progress will be helped or hindered, and that educational reforms will succeed or fail in terms of the quality of public judgment and support. This, in turn, must be based on accurate knowledge and understanding, to be achieved through all the means of mass communications... (5, p. 284).

If these needs for organized public relations programs for education are accepted, then it must be concluded that all schools and school systems have the legal, moral, and professional obligation to organize and conduct active and continuous public relations programs.

The Alberta Teachers' Association considers it as its responsibility to help improve public relations for education. The Association believes that to be effective public relations programs must be developed first at the local level, and that these programs must be based upon competent teaching and a sincere effort on the part of teachers as individuals and as groups to improve their practices (6, pp. 2-3). However, before much time and money was devoted to encouraging and assisting local associations ^{to} initiate public relations programs, it was considered desirable to test various methods of developing local programs.

This study is the first stage of a comprehensive study being conducted by the Alberta Teachers' Association to test

the effect of an organized public relations program on public attitudes toward education.

VI. OVERVIEW

Chapter II of this study is devoted to a review of the public relations literature as it pertains to the analysis of educational programs, the assessment of public attitudes, the quality of instruction as a basis for public relations activities, and the research on communications.

The plan for the study, the methods used in selecting the participating locals, the survey sample, the survey instrument, the methods used in analysing the survey results, and the method of conducting the survey are all covered in Chapter III.

Chapter IV contains an analysis of the survey results and Chapter V deals with the organizational structure for conducting a public relations program in each of the participating units as well as an outline of the public relations programs developed by each participating unit.

Chapter VI summarizes the study and relates it to a continuation of the study being conducted by the Alberta Teachers' Association and aimed at evaluating the effect of the public relations programs, developed in this study, on public attitudes.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Systematic research has contributed very little to the development of educational public relations. The major literature in this field is contained in books and periodicals. Most of the textbook literature consists of "rule of thumb techniques and common-sense observations." The periodic literature is devoted mainly to explanations of experiences with public relations programs and practices (1, p. 1075).

Most of the authorities in the field agree with the following elements in the development of a public relations program:

(1) An analysis of the educational program and problems in a community must be made to determine the educational needs of the community, the degree to which these needs are being met, and the obstacles in the way of meeting these needs.

(2) An assessment of public opinion and attitudes toward the schools must be made to determine what the various publics know about the schools, what they think about the schools, and what they want from the schools.

(3) Educational programs and internal relations aimed at improving the quality of instruction must serve as the basis for external public relations programs.

(4) A two-way program of communication must be developed to involve the community in educational planning and to inform the community of the objectives, program, activities, and needs of the schools.

I. LITERATURE ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

McCloskey believes that after a sound public-communications policy has been established the second step in planning a long range public relations program is to determine what educational services and developments benefit pupils. He believes that a public relations program must be based on the educational needs of the community and that these needs must be determined before a program is launched.

...The determination of objectives is a second and perhaps the most important and difficult aspect of planning. ...

Public communication objectives must be related to educational needs and programs. They should be selected on the basis of how much each one will contribute to public support for current and future school services (2, p. 212).

The Twenty-eighth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators supports the view that a public relations program must be based on educational needs:

...the public relations program ought to be so planned and administered that a continuing emphasis is placed upon the role of education in achieving the values we most deeply cherish. ...

...It (the public relations program) must translate these values into specific needs, then translate the needs into operating procedures (3, pp. 38-39).

II. LITERATURE ON THE ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES

After an analysis is made of the educational needs of the community an assessment of public opinions and attitudes must be made. Kindred believes that:

Before decisions are reached on what additional information should be prepared and disseminated in the community, the schools should be looked at from the viewpoint of parents and taxpayers. A good many people have questions for which they would like answers from school officials. Others harbor attitudes and convictions that need correcting before they will stand behind increased support of public education. And if the findings of opinion polls are accurate, at least half of the citizens in typical communities have no opinions at all on important issues related to their local school systems. When taken together, these segments of the population constitute a large bloc of public opinion. This bloc of opinion is a starting place for building more and better understanding of the schools (4, p. 10).

Yeager also believes that it is the responsibility of educational leadership to be aware of community attitudes:

...Educational leadership must have an awareness of the community backgrounds, the interests, needs, attitudes, and conditions of the people. Such leadership must be quickly conscious of public sensitivity. Intuition or conscience or the accidents of casual judgment cannot be relied upon when we deal with the public about us. Educational leadership must understand the principles of public opinion as well as the nature of the public minds (5, p. 100).

This awareness is necessary, according to Yeager, so that the schools can make necessary adjustments in their programs based upon public needs and wants, and so that the schools can more adequately inform the community and provide the leadership expected of them.

McCloskey believes that after public relations policy and objectives are formulated the next step in planning a public relations program is to determine what can be done to reach these objectives (2, p. 216). Actions taken to reach these objectives, according to McCloskey, must be based partially on the attitudes and opinions held by the people, and

on what they know and do not know about their schools.

"Without such knowledge effective planning is impossible."

Harral supports the view that determining public attitudes toward the schools is a prime pre-requisite for conducting an effective public relations program. He believes that one public attitudes survey is not enough.

Determining public attitudes must be a continuous process:

Even though scientific polling is still in its formative stages, it has proceeded far enough that we can measure public attitudes with a high degree of accuracy. No school, regardless of its size, can afford not to study public attitudes and use opinion surveys as the basis of sound planning in public relations. Moreover, school executives must not rely on occasional surveys. Rather, they should pattern themselves after industrial leaders and others who follow trends in public opinion in a wide variety of continuing studies (6, pp. 15-16).

Wright and Christian also believe that knowing public opinion is important in conducting a public relations program:

As a public relations specialist, then, your first responsibility is to know what people are thinking, especially what the people in the certain group you wish to contact are thinking. We might set forth these principles as a guide:

Know your public.

Know what it thinks.

Know why it thinks so.

Know how it arrives at its conclusions (7, p. 20).

III. LITERATURE ON QUALITY INSTRUCTION AS THE BASIS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Most authorities agree that a public relations program to be effective and have long range, positive results must be ethical and honest. Stewart Harral claims that:

School leaders need not worry about an elaborate code. Rather, they must seek to be truthful and fair in all their relationships and contacts. In short, they must seek to keep all activities on the plane of life's greatest principle of behavior -- the Golden Rule. Modern life is now so complex that anything but openness in the conduct of an institution is self-defeating (6, p. 24).

If this principle is to be applied then both the favorable and the unfavorable elements of the schools program must be open to public scrutiny. Needless to say the degree of public moral and financial support for the schools is directly related to the ratio between the favorable and unfavorable elements of the school program.

The objectives of a public relations program can be achieved only if the program is based upon sound instructional practices. Bortner believes that:

Successful school public relations must be founded upon an outstanding and dynamic educational program. Production necessarily precedes salesmanship, and the teacher's product is clearly defined in terms of doing a first-rate job of instruction, prefatory to arousing public confidence and participation. The end product--pupil progress in this case--is always its own best advertisement (8, p. 9).

Harral also supports this view. He believes that the number one priority in public relations is a quality school program (6, p. 144).

Wright and Christian, in defining public relations, emphasize the importance of sound practices to the success of a public relations program:

Modern public relations is a planned program of policies and conduct that will build public confidence and increase public understanding.

The two most important words in this definition are policies and conduct. These terms do not refer to the policies and practices of the public relations director and his staff in handling the routine duties of his office. "Policies" means the policies laid down by top management in its stewardship of the institution, whether it be a large corporation, a government office, or a social agency. "Conduct" means the conduct of everyone within the organization from top executive to janitor (7, p. 3).

The Twenty-eighth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators, in dealing with this principle, had this to say:

When the public relations program of a school system rests on a foundation of sound classroom accomplishment, it is like a house built upon a rock. Storms of ill-founded criticism and innuendo will not overwhelm it. Its foundations are sure. On the other hand the most systematic and skilfully devised publicity cannot maintain the public's confidence or win its approval for a school program that is fundamentally unsound. No shoring up with "interpretation" can permanently conceal the shortcomings and failures of misdirected or ineffective teaching (3, p. 59).

McCloskey also supports this principle (2, p. 292). He believes that children are entitled to the best possible teaching and that no amount of publicity can give the public confidence in an unsound and poor quality educational program. He also claims that most other professions seek to increase public confidence by constantly improving their services or products. "To be worthy of public confidence we must keep our teaching as good as it can be. ..."

Yeager claims that one of the best ways to increase community support for education and at the same time improve the community is for the teachers themselves to show evidence

that they are growing professionally:

A good teacher seeks constantly to take advantage of opportunities to grow professionally as he teaches. Although the school itself may provide such opportunities, perhaps the greatest degree of growth is provided by the teacher through self-improvement. Where study groups of teachers are concerned with such problems as curriculum improvement, community resources, reading problems of pupils, and school failures, many community contact opportunities are made available... As we lift the teaching profession, we lift the community with it (5, p. 165).

IV. LITERATURE ON COMMUNICATIONS

Public relations programs must be based upon knowledge of the educational program in the community, an understanding of public attitudes toward the schools, and upon a sound instructional program, but for the public relations program to be successful a dynamic program of "two-way" communication must be developed. The publics must be involved in the educational program and they must be kept informed of what the schools are doing. In support of this principle Kindred has this to say:

As a matter of policy, the local board of education must recognize that the school has an obligation to promote intelligent understanding of what it is doing and win good will from as many groups as possible regardless of the size of the group or the sex or age of its members. People who belong to community groups are paying the school bill and they are entitled to know what services the schools offer and why, as well as the problems confronting them. This policy is vital to the survival of the public school system in an economy where competition for the taxpayer's dollar is increasing rapidly.

The policy must be one of interpreting the school program to all groups in the community and inviting

their co-operation in the tremendous task of advancing the cause and quality of public education in our democratic society (4, p. 376).

Kindred outlines many ways by which school-community relations can be improved (4, pp. 379-393). He suggests that school facilities be made available to community groups, that citizens be encouraged to attend school board meetings, and that the professional staff participate actively in parent teacher associations and other community activities. Kindred also suggests that the public can be involved in the school program by the establishment of citizens advisory committees, and by the use of resource people from the community in the instructional program.

Kindred outlines six rules to observe in telling the schools story to the community (4, p. 18).

(1) A skilful use of all media is necessary to establish contact with the public. People will not take the time to find out for themselves, unless the facts and figures are presented in an attractive form.

(2) The school's story should be presented in a form that appeals to the interest of the audience for which it is intended.

(3) All messages must be honest and truthful to win the support and confidence of the public.

(4) The story must be told simply, patiently, and persistently.

(5) The program must be kept in balance. All aspects of the schools program must be interpreted to the community.

(6) It cannot be expected that all people will take a constructive interest in the schools program and problems. The opinions of some people will never be changed, and many others will remain neutral to the schools program. The schools story should be directed at the large middle group which can be influenced.

The Twenty-eighth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators includes the principle of "two-way" communication in its definition of public relations:

...It (public relations) means genuine co-operation in working for good schools, with the public giving as well as receiving ideas. It becomes a two-way process, a two-way flow of ideas between school and community which provides the basis for mutual understanding and effective teamwork (3, p. 13).

Yeager in dealing with "two-way" communication claims that:

Programs of school-community relations organized on the level of developing mutual interaction should have ample facilities for interaction to take place. Working together requires practice in planning, collecting information, studying problems together, and arriving at conclusions and decisions. The program should give evidence of two-way procedures--a flow of co-operative forces working in both directions, each to the benefit of the other.

The Educational Policies Commission has classified into six categories practices which illustrate the interactive process:

- (1) The school learns about the community in order to modify the educational program.
 - (2) The community studies its problems and learns what can be done about them through the schools.
 - (3) School and community act together on school centred projects.
 - (4) School and community act together on other community projects.
 - (5) The school community enriches the school program.
 - (6) The community school enriches community life
- (5, pp. 399-400).

In discussing the communications process McCloskey shows in graphic form the process and structure of both "one-way" and "two-way" communication. Figure 1 illustrates the structures of "one-way" communication and Figure 2 illustrates "two-way" communication (2, pp. 62-63).

A SOURCE → ENCODES → AND TRANS- → TO RECEIVERS ← AND RESPOND
 A MESSAGE MITS IT WHO DECODE IT

You have information or an idea you want to communicate with others

You use words, or gestures, or pictures to encode a message you hope will get attention and be understood

You transmit your message by means of a conversation, letter, newspaper, magazine, book, radio, television, motion picture

Those who notice your message, interpret it in the contexts of their interests and attitudes

And respond with varying degrees of acceptance or rejection

Figure 1. One-Way Communication

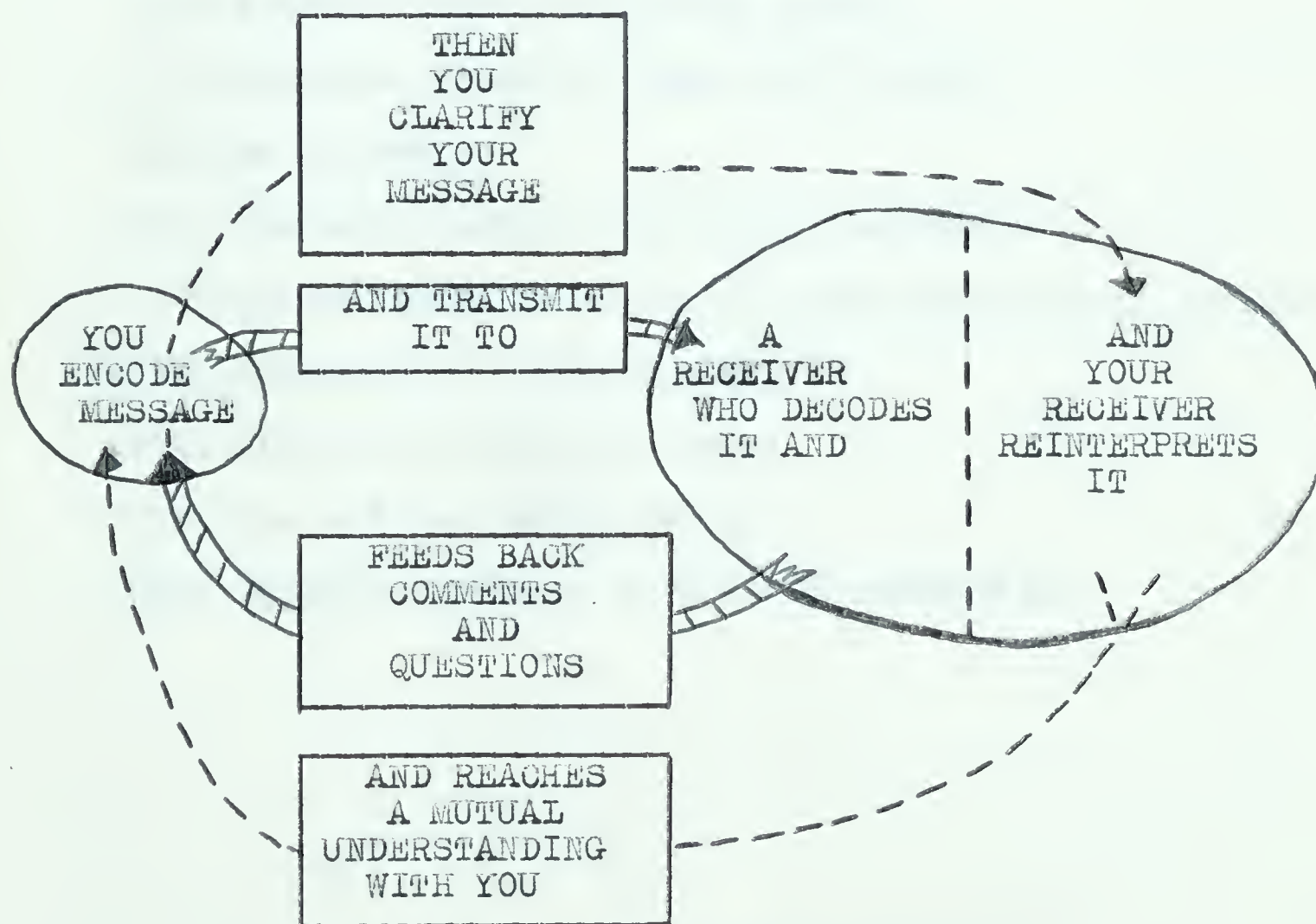


Figure 2. Two-Way Communication

McCloskey suggests several principles to keep in mind when planning communication strategy (2, pp. 103-120).

- (1) Take the initiative. People tend to maintain their first concept of an event or issue.
- (2) Initiate constructive frames of reference.
- (3) Seek public participation. This is the most effective type of communication.
- (4) Involve community leaders in your communication program.
- (5) Give recognition to those who assist you.
- (6) Publicize the accomplishments of the schools.
- (7) Maintain a balance between satisfaction and sufficient discontent to keep opinion active.
- (8) Prevent rumors by giving facts.
- (9) Appraise community lags and blocks.
- (10) Be friendly.
- (11) Indicate regard for citizen interest.
- (12) Acknowledge the value of other educational agencies.
- (13) Communicate continuously.
- (14) Repeat important messages.
- (15) Use all available media.
- (16) Appraise sources of aid and opposition.

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CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE AND TREATMENT OF DATA

I. PLAN FOR THE STUDY

The plan for this study involved the selection of two local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association willing to participate; a survey of public attitudes toward education in each of these locals; and the development of a public relations program by each local association and the centralized schools under their jurisdictions, based primarily on the results of the public attitudes survey and the literature in the field.

II. PARTICIPATING UNITS

The sixty-nine local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association were circulated to determine those which were willing to participate in the study. From the twenty-five locals indicating willingness to participate two were chosen. Criteria used in the selection of these locals included:

(1) the degree of centralization: For the purposes of this study locals which are highly centralized were considered necessary so that most school staffs could conduct a comprehensive public relations program.

(2) coverage by the mass media: It was considered desir-

able to choose locals which were within the range of the major media of mass communications (daily and weekly newspapers, radio, and television).

(3) compactness: In order to facilitate the organization for an effective public relations program it was necessary to choose locals in which teacher committees could meet easily.

The Lacombe and Thorhild locals met the requirements of the above criteria and were therefore chosen to participate in the study.

The Lacombe local has a membership of one hundred and fifty teachers. These teachers are employed by the Lacombe School Division to teach in eight centralized schools ranging in size from seven to fifty-three teachers. The Thorhild local has a membership of seventy-three teachers employed by the County of Thorhild to teach in four centralized schools ranging in size from fourteen to twenty-three teachers.

The schools in both systems are easily accessible by all weather highways, and all communities in both systems are served by both daily and weekly newspapers, radio, and television.

After these locals were tentatively chosen to participate in the study the approval of the superintendents of schools and the school authorities affected was sought and obtained, and meetings in each local consisting of the executive committees, representatives from each school, the

superintendents, and representatives from the school authorities were held to explain the nature of the study and to obtain the co-operation of the locals in conducting the project. Both locals approved of the project and voted to participate.

At each of these meetings, held early in the spring of 1959, explanation and instruction sheets explaining the obligations of each participating unit were circulated and discussed (See Appendix A), and each local agreed to establish an organizational structure within two or three weeks of the date of the meeting.

III. THE SURVEY SAMPLE

As the major basis for planning the public relations program in each area it was decided to conduct a public attitudes survey in each school community within the jurisdictions of the participating locals. The sample chosen for the survey consisted of one of the parents of each grade four pupil. For the purpose of this study it was assumed that the sample was typical of the total population of the participating areas. The total sample in the Lacombe local consisted of 266 parents. The smallest number from any one school was 17 and the largest number from any one school was 86. The total sample from the Thorhild local consisted of 137 parents. The smallest number from any one school was 26 and the largest

number from any one school was 43.

IV. THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Public attitudes toward education were measured by use of the Brimacombe attitude scale (See Appendix B)[#]. This scale was tested for reliability by the "test-retest" method. The correlation between the two tests, given one week apart, was found to be .882 by use of the Pearson r test.

V. METHOD OF ANALYSING THE SURVEY DATA

The Brimacombe Scale can be scored in three different ways; the score for each item in the scale, the score for each of the five categories in the scale, and the total score for the twenty-five items in the scale.

The Score for Each Item. Each item of the scale carries a score ranging from one to five depending upon the response of the person completing the instrument. The most negative attitude toward the aspect of education covered by the item is indicated by a score of one. The most positive attitude is indicated by a score of five. A score of three indicated a neutral attitude.

The positively worded items of the scale (1,2,4,6,7,

[#] A. K. Brimacombe, "The Construction of a Scale to Measure Adult Attitude Toward the Alberta Educational System" (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Alberta, 1958).

10,14,16,17,19,20,23,24, and 25) are valued as follows:

Category Circled	SA	A	U	D	SD
Value	5	4	3	2	1

eg; If a person circled the "A" category he would receive a score of four for the item.

The negatively worded items of the scale (3,5,8,9,11, 12,13,15,18,21, and 22) are valued as follows:

Category Circled	SA	A	U	D	SD
Value	1	2	3	4	5

eg; If a person circled the "A" category he would receive a score of two for the item.

The Score for Each Category. The survey instrument is divided into five categories with five items in each category. The items included in each category and the range of scores possible for each category are as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>Lowest Possible Score</u>	<u>Highest Possible Score</u>
(1) Costs	6,8,12,15,16	5	25
(2) Curriculum	10,14,17,23,25	5	25
(3) General Value	1,9,11,18,24	5	25
(4) Discipline	2,5,7,13,22	5	25
(5) Teacher Education	3,4,19,20,21	5	25

A score of fifteen for any category indicates a neutral attitude toward the category. A score of less than fifteen indicates an unfavorable attitude, and a score of more than fifteen indicates a favorable attitude.

Total Score for The Attitude Scale. The total score for the twenty-five items of the attitude scale can range from twenty-five to one hundred and twenty-five. A score of seventy-five indicates a neutral attitude. A score of less than seventy-five indicates an unfavorable attitude, and a score of more than seventy-five indicates a favorable attitude.

VI. CONDUCTING THE SURVEY

The principal and grade four teachers in each participating school conducted the survey according to specific instructions (See Appendixs C and D). A survey instrument was sent home with each grade four pupil along with instructions to have the parent indicated on the envelope complete the instrument and return it the following morning. The principal of each school returned all completed instruments to the Alberta Teachers' Association for analysis.

A compilation of the survey results was made for each local association and for each participating school.

CHAPTER IV

THE SURVEY FINDINGS

I. THE FINDINGS

Table I shows the mean total score for the Brimacombe Scale in each of the participating schools and for each of the participating locals.

TABLE I

MEAN OF THE SCORES ON THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE
SCALE FOR THE PARTICIPATING UNITS IN
LACOMBE AND THORHILD LOCALS OF THE
ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Lacombe Local		Mean Score	Thorhild Local		Mean Score
School	Number of Teachers		School	Number of Teachers	
Alix	12	81.4	Newbrook	14	83.1
Bentley	25	82.4	Radway	14	84.4
Blackfalds	9	81.3	Redwater	23	85.9
Clive	10	81.7	Thorhild	22	88.1
Eckville	18	82.5			
Lacombe	53	81.9			
Mirror	17	84.5			
Satinwood	7	78.8			
Mean score for the Lacombe Local		81.9	Mean score for the Thorhild Local		85.6

The lowest possible score on the Brimacombe Scale is twenty-five, and the highest possible score is one hundred and twenty-five. A score of less than seventy-five indicates an unfavorable attitude toward the schools, and a score of more than seventy-five indicates a favorable attitude toward the schools.

An examination of Table I reveals that the sample surveyed has, in general, a favorable attitude toward the schools, although in most cases the degree of favorableness is not very marked.

It is interesting to note that the mean scores shown in Table I tend to be higher in the larger schools.

Tables II and III show the mean scores for each of the survey categories in each of the participating schools and each of the participating locals.

TABLE II

MEAN OF THE CATEGORY SCORES OF THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE SCALE IN THE PARTICIPATING UNITS OF THE LACOMBE LOCAL OF THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Participating Unit	Category Scores				
	Costs	Curriculum	General Value	Discipline	Teacher Education
Alix	14.5	18.0	16.3	15.9	16.7
Bentley	14.9	17.8	17.0	15.5	17.2
Blackfalds	14.8	17.7	16.9	15.4	16.5
Clive	14.6	17.5	16.9	15.8	16.9
Eckville	14.8	18.1	16.5	16.0	17.1
Lacombe	15.1	17.6	16.7	16.2	16.3
Mirror	15.0	18.4	16.9	16.8	17.7
Satinwood	13.4	17.1	16.6	15.3	16.4
Mean Score for the Lacombe Local	14.7	17.8	16.7	16.0	16.7

The Brimacombe scale is divided into five categories with five items in each category. The highest possible score in any one category is twenty-five and the lowest possible score is five. A score of more than fifteen indicates a positive attitude toward the category and a score of less than fifteen indicates a negative attitude.

An examination of Table II reveals that in the Lacombe Local all categories with the exception of "Costs" received a favorable response from the sample surveyed. However, in most cases, the degree of favorableness was not very high. Although, the category of "Costs" received an unfavorable response in most participating units in the Lacombe Local, the degree of unfavorableness was not very marked.

TABLE III

MEAN OF THE CATEGORY SCORES ON THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE SCALE IN THE PARTICIPATING UNITS OF THE THORHILD LOCAL OF THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Participating Unit	Category Scores				
	Costs	Curriculum	General Value	Discipline	Teacher Education
Newbrook	15.8	18.0	16.3	15.7	17.3
Radway	15.9	19.3	16.3	15.4	17.5
Redwater	16.5	18.4	16.9	16.3	17.8
Thorhild	16.2	18.9	18.5	17.0	17.5
Mean Score for Thorhild Local	16.0	18.5	17.4	16.2	17.5

All of the categories received a favorable response from the sample surveyed in the Thorhild Local. Each category received a higher score in the Thorhild Local than it did in the Lacombe Local even though the degree of favorableness was not very high.

The category of "Costs" received the lowest score in both locals. This category received the lowest score in seven schools in the Lacombe Local and three schools in the Thorhild Local. The category of "Discipline" received the lowest score of the five categories in the Radway School, and was third lowest in the Blackfalds School. The category of "Discipline" received the second lowest score in all of the other schools.

Table IV shows the items of the Brimacombe Scale which received a mean score of less than three in any one of the participating schools. It also shows the number of schools in which each item received a score of less than three. A score of less than three indicates an unfavorable attitude toward the aspect of education covered by the item. The highest possible score on any one item is five, and the lowest possible score is one. The total number of schools in the Lacombe Local is eight, and the total number of schools in the Thorhild Local is four.

TABLE IV

ITEMS OF THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE SCALE RECEIVING
 SCORES OF LESS THAN THREE IN THE EIGHT
 PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS OF THE
 LACOMBE LOCAL AND THE FOUR
 PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS
 OF THE THORHILD
 LOCAL

Item Number (See Appendix B)	Frequency of Mean Scores Less Than Three	
	Lacombe Local	Thorhild Local
3	1	2
5	8	2
7	1	0
8	8	4
10	2	0
11	5	2
12	8	4
13	0	1
15	8	3
17	2	0
18	0	1
19	2	0
20	4	0
21	1	0
22	7	4
24	3	0

Items 8 and 12 received a mean score of less than three in all of the participating schools. These items are both in the category of "Costs". Items 15 and 22 both received mean scores of less than three in all but one of the participating schools. Item 15 is in the category of "Costs",

and item 22 is in the category of "Discipline". Item 5, also in the category of "Discipline", received a mean score of less than three in all but two of the schools.

TABLE V

MEAN OF THE SCORES FOR EACH OF THE TWENTY-FIVE
ITEMS OF THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE SCALE
FOR THE LACOMBE AND THORHILD LOCALS

Item Number (See Appendix B)	Mean Scores	
	Lacombe Local	Thorhild Local
1	3.3	3.6
2	3.5	3.7
3	3.2	2.9
4	3.4	3.6
5	2.8	2.9
6	3.5	4.1
7	3.3	3.4
8	2.6	2.9
9	3.8	3.9
10	3.5	3.6
11	3.0	3.0
12	2.4	2.7
13	3.7	3.4
14	3.9	4.0
15	2.6	2.6
16	3.6	3.8
17	3.4	3.3
18	3.4	3.3
19	3.0	3.3
20	3.0	3.4
21	4.1	4.3
22	2.7	2.8
23	3.5	3.8
24	3.2	3.6
25	3.5	3.8

Table V shows the mean scores for each of the twenty-five items of the Brimacombe Scale for the Lacombe and Thorhild Locals. It is interesting to note that in both locals item 5, 8, 12, 15, and 22 all received mean scores of less than three. These were the only items which received mean scores of less than three. Items 5 and 22 are in the category of "Discipline", and items 8, 12, and 15 are in the category of "Costs". It is also interesting to note that item 21, in the category of "Teacher Education", received a mean score of four or more in both locals, and that item 14, in the category of "Curriculum", and item 6, in the category of "Costs", both received a mean score of four or more in the Thorhild Local.

II. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the data revealed that the sample surveyed had, in general, a favorable attitude toward the schools, although the degree of favorableness was not very marked. The category of "Costs" received the most unfavorable response of any category in both the Lacombe and Thorhild Locals, and the category of "Discipline" received the second lowest mean score in both locals. The category of "Curriculum" received the most favorable response in both locals.

The possible range of scores between any two categories is twenty. It is significant to note that the range between the category with the highest score and the category with the

lowest score is only 3.1 in the Lacombe Local and 2.5 in the Thorhild Local. This would indicate that the attitudes of the sample surveyed did not vary to any marked degree for any of the categories.

The fact that the scores on all of the categories did not deviate from the mean by more than 4.8 points out of a total possible deviation of 10, would indicate that individual attitudes toward the schools tended to cluster together rather than to represent extremes.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPING THE PROGRAM

I. PROCEDURE

After the results of the survey were compiled each participating unit was sent the analysis of the survey for its area (See Appendix E), along with suggestions for organizing and conducting a public relations program (See Appendix F). A meeting of each school staff as well as a meeting of the central planning committees of each of the participating locals was also planned. Each unit was informed of this meeting at the same time it received the survey results. All units were requested to discuss the survey results and consider possible projects for their program prior to this meeting.

The meeting of each participating unit was held within three weeks after it received the survey analysis. At each meeting, held in May of 1959, the results of the survey were discussed and one or two categories, of the Brimacombe attitude scale, upon which to base an internal study project and an external public relations program, were tentatively chosen. Each unit was requested to choose a category which received a low mean scores in its area. The topic of the internal study project was to be emphasized in the external public relations program.

Organizational plans were also discussed at the May meetings. All units agreed to organize for the project, make tentative plans for their programs, and report to head office of the Alberta Teachers' Association before June 30, 1959. Each unit was also provided with a kit of selected public relations references (See Appendixes G and H).

During July and August of 1959, the tentative organizational structure and program plans were studied and another series of meetings was planned for September. The September meetings were designed to finalize plans for the programs in each unit and get them started.

At the September meetings minor modifications were suggested in the plans for most units and all units agreed to have their programs underway by October 30.

Each unit agreed to organize according to the structure illustrated in Figure 3.

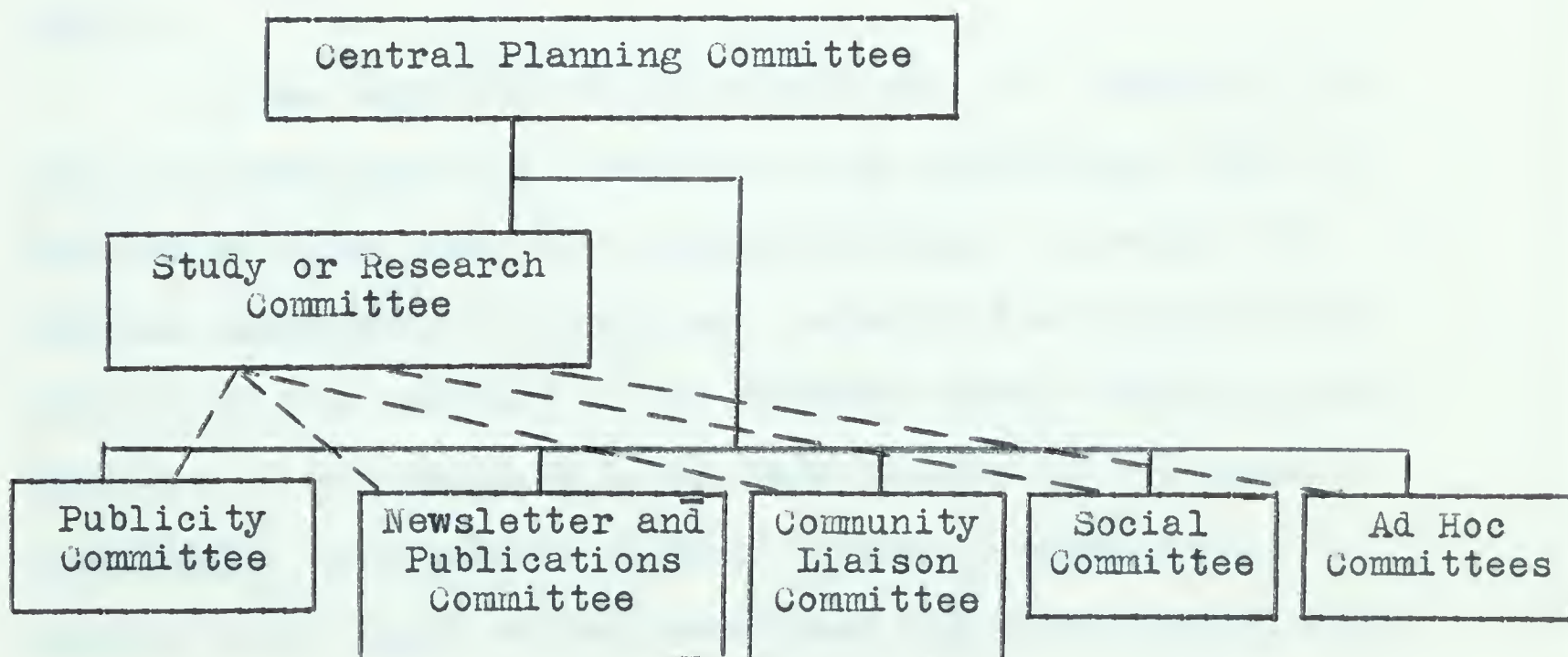


FIGURE 3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The function of the Central Planning Committee was to plan the overall program and co-ordinate the work of the various sub-committees. The function of the Research Committee was to organize and conduct studies in the categories of the Brimacombe attitude scale chosen for the program. The Publicity Committee was to maintain communications with the mass media. The Newsletter and Publications committee, at the school staff level, was to prepare and publish a monthly newsletter for distribution to the parents and certain other members of the community. At the local level the Newsletter Committee was to prepare and publish a newsletter for distribution to members of the local and various community groups. The Community Liaison Committee was to maintain liaison with community groups through means other than the mass media. The Social Committee was to organize and conduct social events. Ad hoc committees were to be established as needed.

It was suggested to each unit that all teachers willing to participate be involved in the project and that no teacher be given too many responsibilities. A survey of teacher membership on committees revealed that eighty-seven percent of the teachers in the Lacombe local, and all of the teachers in the Thorhild local were members of one or more committees. Twenty-four percent of the teachers in the Lacombe local acted on two committees and four percent acted on more than two committees. Twenty-nine percent of the

teachers in the Thorhild local acted on two committees, and five percent served on more than two committees.

In order to co-ordinate and facilitate the program each school staff was requested to report monthly to the secretary of the Central Planning Committee of the local and to head office of the Alberta Teachers' Association. This report was to contain information on the past months program and plans for the following month. The secretary of the Central Planning Committee of each local was to submit a monthly report on the locals program and plans to head office of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Each unit, except the Clive and Mirror schools, completed its plans, initiated its program, and reported to head office of the Alberta Teachers' Association by October 30, 1959. The Clive and Mirror staff voted not to participate in the program.

II. PROGRAM PLANS

The Lacombe Local. The Lacombe local chose the category of "Costs" upon which to base its program. This category was chosen for two reasons--first, it received the lowest score of any of the five categories, and second, the nature of the category is such that it can be handled more easily by a local than by a school staff.

The Lacombe local developed an organizational structure consisting of a Central Planning Committee, a Research

Committee, a Newsletter Committee, a Press Committee, a Community Liaison Committee, and a Social and Special Events Committee. H. R. Ross, Superintendent of Schools for the Lacombe School Division, sat on the Central Planning Committee, Mrs. E. Summerville, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Lacombe School Division, sat on the Central Planning Committee and the Research Committee, and E. Todd, Secretary-Treasurer of the Lacombe School Division, sat on the Research Committee.

The Central Planning Committee was to act as a coordinating body and as a clearing house of information and ideas. The Research Committee planned to conduct a study of the costs and results of education in the Lacombe School Division for the years 1949 - 1959. The major areas of investigation were to include: a comparison of expenditures per pupil with per capita income over the ten year period, a study of student retention, a comparison of national, provincial, and local expenditures on various services over the ten year period, and a comparison of teacher qualifications in the division over the ten year period. The Press Committee planned to make major press releases on events and topics such as banquets, institutes, conventions, scholarship presentations, athletic competitions, and the progress and results of the "Costs" study. The committee also planned to distribute two-hundred copies of Education at the Crossroads, a pamphlet prepared by the Canadian Conference on Education,

throughout the division. The Social and Special Events Committee planned three major events -- a "Get-acquainted" Banquet during September for all teachers and school board members, An Education Week banquet, and a curling bonspiel. The Newsletter Committee planned to issue a bi-monthly newsletter for all members of the local. The Community Liaison Committee planned to establish a speakers bureau.

The Alix School. The Alix staff chose two categories from the Brimacombe scale to use as the basis for its program. The category of "Discipline" was selected because it received the lowest mean score of the five categories with the exception of the category of "Costs". The category of "Curriculum" was chosen because several members of the Alix staff were interested in working on a science project.

The organizational structure developed by the Alix staff consisted of a Central Planning Committee, a Newsletter, Press, and Community Liaison Committee, a Discipline Study Committee, and a Science Study Committee.

In addition to co-ordinating and administering the program the Central Planning Committee assumed the responsibilities of organizing parent-teacher interviews, planning an Education Week program, and initiating the formation of a Home and School Association in the community. The Press, Newsletter, and Community Liaison Committee planned to publish a bi-monthly newsletter for distribution to parents, and issue press releases on all major school events as well as

the progress and results of the Discipline and Science studies. The Discipline Study Committee planned to construct a questionnaire for teachers, parents, and students designed to determine their views and attitudes relating to discipline. The committee also planned to study the literature on discipline with the objective in mind of improving the disciplinary practices of the school. The Science Study Committee planned to examine the science courses offered in the school with a view to reducing the overlapping of content. The committee also decided to prepare a central equipment depot where needed equipment would be readily available.

The Bentley School. The Bentley school chose the category of "Discipline" upon which to base its program. This category was chosen because it received the lowest mean score of the five categories of the Brimacombe scale with the exception of the category of "Costs," and because it was of interest to all staff members.

The Bentley school developed an organizational structure consisting of a Central Planning Committee, a Research Committee, a Newsletter Committee, a Home and School and Community Liaison Committee, and a Press Committee.

The Central Planning Committee was to act as the coordination and administrative body for the program. The Research Committee planned a study of discipline similar in nature to the one reported for Alix. The Home and School and

Community Liaison Committee worked out a program with the Bentley Home and School Association in which the latter would devote several of its meetings to the topic of "discipline." The Home and School Association established a "mock Royal Commission" to receive and hear briefs on "discipline." The Newsletter Committee made plans to issue a monthly newsletter to parents, and the Press Committee prepared to issue releases on major school events and the progress and results of the Discipline Study.

The Blackfalds School. The category of "Curriculum" was chosen by the Blackfalds staff as the basis for its program. This category received the second highest mean score, but the staff chose it because of their interest in the area.

It was decided that all staff members would contribute to all phases of the project, but that certain members would be chosen to carry major responsibility for each of the following: press releases, parent newsletters, and community liaison.

The research project chosen was concerned with the teaching of arithmetic. It was decided to administer accuracy and problem-solving tests, analyse the results, implement remedial measures, and re-test to measure improvements. The external phase of the project included plans to issue a monthly newsletter to parents, and prepare news releases on major school events as well as the progress and

results of the Arithmetic Study.

The Eckville School. The Eckville staff chose the topic of "Curriculum" on which to base its program. This category of the Brimacombe scale received the highest mean score, but the Eckville staff decided to choose it because of their interest in conducting a science project.

Science Study Committees in each of the Senior High School, Junior High School, and Elementary levels were the only form of organizational structure developed by the staff.

Plans for the science projects were not specific, but it was expected that a study of the literature of "science teaching" would be made, and that a list of science experiments suitable for each grade level would be prepared. The only external project planned was a science display for a Home and School meeting.

The Lacombe School. Items "nineteen" and "twenty" of the Brimacombe scale were chosen by the staff of the Lacombe school. Both of these items are in the category of "Teacher Education." These items were chosen for two reasons: first, they both received fairly low mean scores, and second, the Lacombe staff was already engaged in in-service education projects concerning the teaching of language and science. The Language and Science projects were not a part of this study because they had been initiated the previous year, but the staff decided to use these projects as a basis for

their external public relations program.

The organizational structure developed by the Lacombe staff consisted of a Central Planning Committee, a Press, Publications, and Newsletter Committee, a Social Committee, and an Education Week Committee.

As was the case in most schools, the Central Planning Committee was to act as the co-ordinating and administrative body. The Press, Publications, and Newsletter Committee planned to issue a monthly newsletter to parents, and make releases on major school events as well as the progress and results of the Language and Science projects. The Social Committee planned to hold various social events for the staff during the year. The Community Liaison Committee planned the establishment of a speakers bureau, and the Education Week Committee was to organize and conduct an Education Week program.

The Satinwood School. The Satinwood staff chose the category of "Discipline" upon which to base its program, because this category received the lowest mean score of all the categories of the Brimacombe scale with the exception of the category of "Costs."

The Satinwood organizational structure consisted of a Central Planning Committee, a Newsletter Committee, and a Community Liaison Committee.

In addition to acting as the co-ordinating and administrative body, the Central Planning Committee functioned as

a research committee. The Discipline Study project was to consist of the construction of a questionnaire to be completed by parents with the objective of determining their views and attitudes on discipline, an analysis of the replies, a study of the related literature, and an attempt to improve the disciplinary practices of the school. The Community Liaison Committee planned to contact the Home and School Association with the proposal that at least one of its meetings during the year be devoted to the topic of "discipline." The Newsletter Committee planned to issue a monthly newsletter to parents, and the Press Committee was prepared to issue releases on major school events and the progress and results of the Discipline Study.

The Thorhild Local. The Thorhild local chose the category of "Costs" upon which to base its program. This category received the lowest mean score of all the categories of the Brimacombe scale, and it was considered more convenient to deal with this topic at the local level than it would be at the school level.

The organizational structure developed by the Thorhild local consisted of a Central Planning Committee, an Educational Research Committee, a Press Committee, a Newsletter Committee, and a Community Liaison Committee. I. Goresky, Superintendent of Schools for the County of Thorhild, served on the Central Planning Committee. Each sub-committee was composed of a representative from each of the four centralized

schools in the County of Thorhild.

The Central Planning Committee scheduled monthly meetings to co-ordinate the work of all sub-committees and perform its administrative tasks. The Educational Research Committee planned a study of the Educational Costs and Results in the County of Thorhild. It was decided to approach this study by searching for answers to the following questions:

(1) What percentage of the County's graduating students go on to professional work?

(2) What is the percentage of drop-outs in the County, grade by grade?

(3) What are the expenditures on buildings, vans, and teachers?

(4) What services does the taxpayer get for his dollar?

(5) What is the comparison of school costs year by year on a per pupil basis?

(6) What is the change in enrolment year by year?

(7) Is there any change, year by year, in Grade IX and Grade XII examination results?

The Newsletter Committee planned to issue a monthly newsletter for distribution to the members of the local and to various community groups. The newsletter would contain articles on the progress and results of the Costs and Achievements study. The Press Committee decided to issue releases on all major educational events and issues, especially

the progress and results of the Costs and Achievements study. The Community Relations Committee planned to establish a speakers bureau.

The Newbrook School. The Newbrook school chose the category of "General Value" upon which to base its program. This category received the lowest mean score of any of the five categories of the Brimacombe scale with the exception of the category of "Costs." Item eleven -- "Schools today tend to develop lazy students." -- was selected for special attention. The specific study project chosen was the problem of underachievers in the Newbrook school.

The Newbrook staff developed an organizational structure consisting of a Central Planning Committee, a Research Committee, a Press Committee, a Newsletter Committee, and a Community Liaison Committee.

The Central Planning Committee, in addition to its co-ordination and administrative functions, assisted in planning and conducting the study project. The Research Committee decided to approach the study of "underachievers" according to the following plan: the identification of underachievers by means of tests and teacher opinion, an analysis of the causes of underachievement in each case, a study of the related literature, the introduction of corrective measures, and an evaluation to determine the success of the corrective measures.

The Newsletter Committee planned to issue a monthly newsletter to parents. No specific plans were made by the Community Liaison Committee.

The Radway School. The Radway staff chose the topic "Student Study Habits" as the basis for its program. This topic is related to the categories of "General Value" and "Discipline", which received the lowest mean scores in comparison with the other categories of the Brimacombe attitude scale.

The organizational structure developed by the Radway staff consisted of a Central Planning Committee, a Publicity Committee, a Newsletter Committee, a Social Committee, a Parent and Community Relations Committee, and an Educational Research Committee.

The Central Planning Committee scheduled bi-weekly meetings to perform its co-ordination and administrative duties. The Research Committee decided to conduct the study of Student Study Habits according to the following plan: the determination of present study habits of students in grades three to twelve by means of evaluations by students, parents, and teachers; the construction and conducting of a test to measure the effectiveness of student study habits; a study of the related literature; instruction in proper study habits in all classes except the grade eight class, which was to be used as a control group; a re-test of the effectiveness of student study habits; and an evaluation to determine if the

instruction in study habits affected the study habits of students.

The Press Committee planned to make releases on all major school events and issues, especially on the progress and results of the study of Student Study Habits. The Newsletter Committee decided to issue a monthly newsletter to parents. No specific plans were made by the Parent and Community Relations Committee.

The Redwater School. The Redwater staff chose item eleven of the Brimacombe scale -- "Schools today tend to develop lazy students" -- as the basis for its program. This item is included in the category "General Value" of the Brimacombe scale, but it also relates to "Discipline." Both these categories received relatively low mean scores.

The Redwater staff developed an organizational structure consisting of a Central Planning Committee, a Publicity Committee, and a Social Committee.

In addition to its co-ordination and administrative duties, the Central Planning Committee assumed the responsibility of planning and conducting the Lazy Student study. It was decided to conduct this study by preparing suggestions for dealing with lazy students, for parents, teachers, and the community. The external committees planned to publicize these suggestions through press releases, parent newsletters, the Home and School Association, and by means of a speakers bureau.

The Thorhild School. The category of "Discipline" was selected by the Thorhild staff as a basis for its program, because it received the lowest mean score of all five categories of the Brimacombe scale with the exception of the category of "Costs."

The organizational structure developed consisted of a Central Planning Committee, a Press Committee, a Newsletter Committee, and a Research Committee.

The Central Planning Committee scheduled monthly meetings to perform its co-ordination and administrative functions. The only specific plan made by the Research Committee was to prepare questionnaires on discipline for parents, students, and teachers. Further study plans were to be made after the results of the discipline survey were analysed. The Community Liaison Committee planned to organize a speakers bureau. This committee was also given the responsibility of organizing and conducting an Education Week program. The Newsletter Committee planned to issue a monthly newsletter to parents. The Press Committee decided to issue releases on major school events and issues, especially the progress and results of the Discipline study.

SUMMARY

After the analysis of the survey was studied each unit selected one or more categories of the Brimacombe Scale upon which to base its public relations program. Most units

selected a category which received a relatively unfavorable response from the sample surveyed. Following the selection of a category an organizational structure consisting of a Central Planning Committee, a Research and Study Committee, a Community Liaison Committee, a Newsletter and Publications Committee, a Social Committee, and various ad hoc committees was established by each unit. Most units also attempted to organize their programs so that all teachers willing to participate would be involved and no teacher would be given too many responsibilities.

The category of "Costs" was selected by both local associations as the basis for their public relations programs. Five school staffs selected the category of "Discipline," three selected "Curriculum," one selected "Teacher Education," and three selected the category of "General Value."

The program plans in most units called for a research or study project based upon the survey category selected, a periodic newsletter to parents, publicity through the local communications media, the establishment of a speakers bureau, and the sponsoring of various social events. The work of the Research and Study Committee was to be emphasized in the external public relations projects of each co-operating unit.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to develop public relations programs in two locals of the Alberta Teachers' Association and the school staffs within their jurisdictions, with the purpose of devising ways and means of measuring and analysing public attitudes toward education as a basis for organized public relations programs at the local association and school staff levels. The study was limited to the planning of public relations programs in the co-operating units, based upon a survey of public attitudes and the public relations literature pertaining to program planning. No attempt was made to organize the public relations activities of individual teachers.

For the purposes of the study it was assumed that favorable public attitudes are necessary to ensure adequate moral and financial support for education, that public attitudes can be measured, and that the authorities used in determining the nature of the programs are competent in their fields.

Most public relations authorities agree that an assessment of public attitudes toward the schools should serve as the basis for public relations programs, and that an effective two-way program of communications must be developed between the schools and their communities. The authorities also agree

that educational programs aimed at improving the quality of instruction can be very effective in improving public attitudes toward the schools.

The Brimacombe Attitude Scale was administered to 403 parents of grade four students in the co-operating units. The scale measured their attitudes towards costs, curriculum, the general value of education, discipline, and teacher education on a five point continuum. The survey data was analysed and each co-operating unit planned a program based upon a category of the Brimacombe Scale which received a relatively unfavorable reaction from the sample surveyed.

An analysis of the survey data indicated a favorable attitude toward the schools, although the degree of favorableness was not very marked. However, the analysis did indicate that the greatest need for public relations programs lay in the areas of "Costs" and "Discipline," in that order. The fact that the scores on each of the categories deviated only slightly from the mean would indicate that individual attitudes of the parents surveyed tended to cluster together rather than to represent extremes.

Following the selection of a category upon which to base its program each co-operating unit established an organizational structure consisting of a Central Planning Committee, a Research and Study Committee, a Community Liaison Committee, a Newsletter and Publications Committee, a Social Committee, and various ad hoc committees.

The category of "Costs" was selected by both local associations as the basis for their public relations programs. Five school staffs selected the category of "Discipline," three selected "Curriculum," one selected "Teacher Education," and three selected the category of "General Value."

The program plans in most units called for a research or study project based upon the survey category selected, a periodic newsletter to parents, publicity through the local communications media, the establishment of a speakers bureau, and the sponsoring of various social events. The work of the Research and Study Committee was to be emphasized in the external public relations projects of each co-operating unit.

The study concluded after each participating unit had organized its public relations program. However, the investigation is being continued by the Alberta Teachers' Association to determine the effectiveness with which the programs were conducted and the effect of the programs on public attitudes toward education.

This study accomplished two major objectives -- it developed a procedure for measuring and analysing public attitudes toward education, which can be used in the initial stages of planning a public relations program, and it developed an organizational structure for conducting public relations programs at the local association and school staff levels. However, the effectiveness of these procedures can-

not be fully determined until the completion of the investigation being conducted by the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Further studies, in depth, could be conducted to determine the effectiveness of different types of public relations projects in changing public attitudes toward education. Various organizational structures could be tested, as could the attitudes of teachers toward organized public relations programs. Different methods of measuring public attitudes toward education could also be investigated.

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APPENDIX A

THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION'S
PUBLIC RELATIONS PILOT PROJECT

THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION'S
PUBLIC RELATIONS PILOT PROJECT

Instructions to Participating Locals

The Alberta Teachers' Association, in co-operation with the Department of Education and the Faculty of Education, is conducting a public relations pilot project in two local associations of the Alberta Teachers' Association. Your local has been chosen to participate. Detailed plans for the project are attached.

We are asking for your co-operation to conduct the project. The Provincial Executive is prepared to spend up to \$200 in each participating local.

If you decide to participate, it will be essential that you make this project your major activity for the remainder of this term and for all of next term. Each school will also be called upon to place major emphasis on the project.

If you decide to participate, you will have to carry out the following plans or modifications of them.

(1) You will need an enthusiastic public relations committee and education committee. Close liaison must be established between these committees. Each school should name a representative to the public relations committee.

(2) Each principal must be prepared to co-operate in the project.

(a) The principal should explain the project to his staff and solicit their support.

(b) The principal will be called upon to supervise the public attitudes survey.

(c) The principal is the keyman in any public relations project undertaken by his school.

(d) Each school staff, depending upon its size and organization, could organize according to the following plan.

- Establish a central co-ordinating committee.

(Principal and three or four staff members.)

This committee's function would be to prepare a program for staff approval and to co-ordinate projects undertaken.

- Small committees would be organized to plan and conduct each project.

- The entire staff must be involved in some way and have a voice in the overall plans.

(3) Each school staff and the local committee should have a secretary or a recorder to keep records and report to Head Office.

(4) The type of organization that will be used in this project and an example of a program is contained in Volume II, Number 1 of the public relations bulletin.

(5) You should carry out plans for an organizational structure within the next two or three weeks.

(6) The local and each school should make a detailed report of the public relations and education activities conducted during the current school term. A copy of this report should be forwarded to Head Office.

(7) When the results of the initial survey have been analyzed, (this will be done separately for each school unit), each school and the local committee will be informed of the results. Following notification of the results, you should immediately begin to consider the type of program you can undertake. This program should be based on the survey results.

(8) Shortly after you have been informed of the results of the survey, a meeting of your public relations and education committee will be called to plan the local program.

(9) During the week immediately following the local meeting, a series of meetings on successive days or evenings will be held with the planning committee of each school staff to plan the school program.

(10) Early in September, another series of meetings will be arranged to finalize the plans and to get the project underway.

(11) Resource kits will be made available from Head Office.

It must be remembered that the success of this project will be determined by the enthusiasm of your teachers and their efforts to make it a success.

APPENDIX B

THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE SCALE

THE BRIMACOMBE ATTITUDE SCALE

WHAT DO ALBERTANS THINK OF THEIR SCHOOLS?

This scale is designed to measure the attitudes of Albertans towards their schools.

By answering the questions you will help us to discover what our citizens think of their schools. Your answers are confidential and will not be read by anyone not concerned with the investigation. The collective answers of citizens from every walk of life will give us a complete picture of public opinion toward education today which will be of value in planning for the future.

The study is sponsored by the Alberta Teachers' Association in co-operation with the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, and the Department of Education.

COULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THIS EVENING, SEAL THE FORM IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED, AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR CHILD TOMORROW MORNING.

Thank you for your co-operation

THESE QUESTIONS ARE TO BE ANSWERED BY THE MALE PARENT OR GUARDIAN.#

ALBERTA SCALE OF ADULT ATTITUDE TOWARD EDUCATION

Instructions

The scale consists of a number of statements. Following each statement is a series of letters which have the following meanings:

SA Strongly Agree
A Agree
U Undecided
D Disagree
SD Strongly Disagree

#One half of the instruments went to the male parent and one half went to the female parent.

Please circle the letter or letters which best express your feeling toward each statement.

EXAMPLE: What Canada needs is a strong dictatorship.

SA A U D SD

If you disagree with the statement you would circle the "D".

If you violently oppose such a condition in Canada, you would then circle the "SD" letters.

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| (1) Schools of today prepare children to cope with life better than they did when I was young. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (2) The initiative stimulated in schools of today benefits a person the rest of his life. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (3) The quality of teachers is falling. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (4) A real effort is being made in Alberta to increase the number of well trained teachers. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (5) The play atmosphere of schools today does not develop perserverence. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (6) It is worth the cost of counters, stoves and sewing machines to have good facilities for household economics courses. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (7) The idea of self-discipline now used in many of our schools today, is more effective than discipline through fear. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (8) School administration costs (caretaking, secretarial work and so forth) are much too high. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (9) Too much of a person's lifetime is spent getting an education. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (10) The schools under present conditions are teaching the things students should learn. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (11) Schools today tend to develop lazy students. | SA | A | U | D | SD |

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| (12) Some of our school buildings are unnecessarily elaborate and costly. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (13) The type of discipline in our schools is to blame for most of our juvenile delinquency. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (14) Athletics are a very beneficial part of the school program. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (15) School costs are too high for the results achieved. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (16) I am glad to see more money being spent to equip school laboratories adequately. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (17) The standard of education in Alberta is equal to that in any part of Canada. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (18) I am not satisfied with the schools in my own district. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (19) The teaching methods of today are a real inspiration to pupils. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (20) The present system of education in Alberta promotes more efficient learning than ever before. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (21) I could teach my children better than the schools do. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (22) Discipline in most schools is too lax. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (23) Students of today are better informed than I was when I was going to school. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (24) The schools of today give more support and encouragement to average students than they used to do. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| (25) The variety of subjects taught in our schools today is better for the students than the former emphasis on only a few subjects. | SA | A | U | D | SD |

APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS TO PRINCIPALS

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS TO PRINCIPALS

WHAT DO ALBERTANS THINK OF THEIR SCHOOLS?

(Instructions to Principals)

(1) Give one copy of "INSTRUCTION SHEET TO GRADE IV TEACHER", two copies of the "CHECK LIST", and the correct number of questionnaires to each of your Grade IV teachers. Go over the instructions with each teacher and make sure they understand them.

(2) Exactly one week after the questionnaires have been distributed to your Grade IV students, collect all of the returned questionnaires and both copies of the "CHECK LIST" from your Grade IV teachers.

(3) Send all of the returned questionnaires and one copy of the "CHECK LIST" to Head Office. Large envelopes are provided for this purpose.

(4) Keep the duplicate "CHECK LIST" in the school files.

APPENDIX D

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS TO TEACHERS

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS TO TEACHERS

WHAT DO ALBERTANS THINK OF THEIR SCHOOLS?

(Instructions to Grade IV Teachers)

(1) A public attitudes questionnaire, enclosed in the envelope provided, is to be handed to each Grade IV student in your school. Each Grade IV student is to take the questionnaire home, have the parent, indicated on the envelope, answer it, and then return it to you the following morning.

(2) Place the name of each Grade IV child in your room on the attached "CHECK LIST". In the column headed "PARENT TO ANSWER QUESTIONNAIRE", place the word "FATHER" and then "MOTHER" alternately opposite each name on the "CHECK LIST". In cases where a child has only one parent or guardian, place the appropriate word, "FATHER" or "MOTHER", opposite his or her name on the "CHECK LIST". e.g.

Grade IV Pupils' Names (Alphabetical Order)	Parent to Answer Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire
Allen, John	Father	
Brown, William	Mother	
Craig, Tom	Father	
Duncan, Percy	Mother	

Fill in a duplicate copy of the "CHECK LIST" to be kept in the school files.

(3) After reading the instructions to your class (4. below), give an envelope with the words "THE ENCLOSED

QUESTIONS ARE TO BE ANSWERED BY THE MALE PARENT OR GUARDIAN" on the front to each child with the word "FATHER" opposite his or her name on the "CHECK LIST", and give an envelope with "THE ENCLOSED QUESTIONS ARE TO BE ANSWERED BY THE FEMALE PARENT OR GUARDIAN" printed on the front to each child with the word "MOTHER" opposite his or her name on the "CHECK LIST". Be sure to fill in the duplicate "CHECK LIST" for the school files.

(4) Please read these instructions to your class before distributing the envelopes and enclosed questionnaires.

WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOUR PARENTS THINK OF
OUR SCHOOLS?

I AM GOING TO GIVE EACH STUDENT IN GRADE IV AN ENVELOPE WITH A SHEET OF QUESTIONS INSIDE. SOME OF YOU WILL GET AN ENVELOPE WHICH YOU WILL TAKE HOME TO YOUR MOTHERS, AND OTHERS WILL GET AN ENVELOPE WHICH YOU WILL TAKE HOME TO YOUR FATHERS. IF YOU ARE ASKED TO TAKE AN ENVELOPE HOME TO YOUR MOTHER, MAKE SURE THAT YOUR MOTHER ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS ON THE SHEET INSIDE, AND IF YOU ARE ASKED TO TAKE AN ENVELOPE HOME TO YOUR FATHER, MAKE SURE THAT YOUR FATHER ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS ON THE SHEET INSIDE.

AFTER THE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED, THE SHEET IS TO BE PLACED BACK IN THE ENVELOPE, AND THEN THE ENVELOPE IS TO BE SEALED. PLEASE BRING THE SHEET, SEALED IN THE ENVELOPE, BACK TO ME TOMORROW MORNING.

PLEASE COME UP AND GET AN ENVELOPE AS I CALL YOUR NAME.

(5) As you give each child an envelope, tell him or her what parent is to answer it.

(6) As each child returns the questionnaire, place a check mark (✓) opposite his or her name in the space headed "QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED" on the "CHECK LIST". "DO NOT OPEN THE ENVELOPES."

(7) Remind each child who does not return the envelope the first day to do so the next day.

(8) When all the questionnaires have been returned, or not later than one week after they have been handed out, give all the envelopes and both copies of the "CHECK LIST" to your principal. Your principal will forward the questionnaires and one copy of the "CHECK LIST" to Head Office in the envelope provided for this purpose. He will keep the duplicate copy of the "CHECK LIST" in the school files.

Thank you for your co-operation.

APPENDIX E

RESULTS OF THE ALBERTA TEACHERS'
ASSOCIATION PUBLIC ATTITUDES SURVEY

RESULTS OF THE
ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
PUBLIC ATTITUDES SURVEY

LOCAL OR SCHOOL

Enclosed please find the results of the first public attitudes survey for your school. The results are indicated in three ways.

(1) The Average Score for the Questionnaire as a Whole.

The positively worded questions (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, and 25) are valued as follows:

<u>Category Circled</u>	SA	A	U	D	SD
<u>Value</u>	5	4	3	2	1

e.g., If a parent circled the "A" Category, he would receive a value of 4 for the question.

The negatively worded questions (3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 21, and 22) are valued as follows:

<u>Category Circled</u>	SA	A	U	D	SD
<u>Value</u>	1	2	3	4	5

e.g., If a parent circled the "A" Category, he would receive a value of 2 for the question.

Total scores for the questionnaire can vary from 25 to 125. A low score indicates a negative attitude toward the schools, and a high score indicates a positive attitude toward the schools.

The average score for your school, calculated from the

_____ completed questionnaires returned, is _____.

The low score is _____, and the high score is _____.

A copy of the scores for each questionnaire is enclosed.

(2) The Average Score for Each Question.

The average score for each question is also enclosed.

The most negative attitude would be indicated by a score of 1, and the most positive attitude would be indicated by a score of 5.

(3) The Score for Each Category.

The questionnaire is divided into 5 categories with 5 questions in each category. The score for your school in each category is indicated below along with the lowest and highest possible score in each category.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Questions</u>	<u>Lowest Possible Score</u>	<u>Highest Possible Score</u>	<u>Score in Your School</u>
1. Costs	6,8,12,15,16	5	25	_____
2. Curriculum	10,14,17,23,25	5	25	_____
3. General Value	1,9,11,18,24	5	25	_____
4. Discipline	2,5,7,13,22	5	25	_____
5. Teacher Education	3,4,19,20,21	5	25	_____

ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

E. J. Ingram,
Executive Assistant

APPENDIX F

SUGGESTIONS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMS FOR THE A.T.A. PUBLIC RELATIONS PILOT PROJECT

SUGGESTIONS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMS FOR THE
A.T.A. PUBLIC RELATIONS PILOT PROJECT

(1) Analyze the results of the public attitudes survey and base your program on these results. You should only choose one, or at the most, two survey categories on which to base your program.

(2) An organizational structure and a sample program is suggested in Vol. II, No. 1 of the public relations bulletin. Vol. II, No. 4 of the public relations bulletin should also be of assistance in planning and conducting a program.

(3) Internal Program.

(a) Plan one or more studies in the survey category you have chosen. Action research suggestions and procedures are contained in Vol. II, No. 3 of the public relations bulletin.

(4) External Program.

(a) Press Committee - This committee should report school programs periodically (once a month or whenever there is important news to report to the local papers, radio and TV stations). The committee should study the booklet, LET'S GO TO PRESS. News stories should be based, as much as possible, on the survey category you have chosen for your project.

(b) Newsletter and Publications Committee - This committee would have the responsibility of publishing a monthly newsletter to parents. Emphasis should be

placed upon the survey category you have chosen.

The newsletter committee for a local would be concerned with a newsletter to teachers. This committee would also be in charge of publishing information sheets or leaflets as the need arises.

(c) Community Liaison Committee - This committee should be responsible for contacts with community groups and the establishment of a speakers' bureau.

(d) Social Committee - This committee would plan and conduct social events such as get-acquainted parties, bonspiels, and banquets.

(e) Education Week Committee - This committee would plan education week activities in co-operation with community groups.

(f) Special Events Committees - These committees can be established as the need arises.

(g) Secretary - Keep accurate records and send reports to head office.

(5) A tentative organizational structure should be established this term. Tentative plans for each project should also be made by the co-ordinating committee and each sub-committee so that the projects can commence early in September. Detailed notes should be made and kept in the files for reference next September.

(6) Another meeting will be arranged in September to finalize the organizational structure and get the project underway.

(7) Each school staff as well as the local association should prepare a report on public relations projects conducted during the 1958-59 school year and forward a copy to head office.

E. J. Ingram

APPENDIX G

REFERENCES PROVIDED TO THE CENTRAL PLANNING COMMITTEES
OF THE PARTICIPATING LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

REFERENCES PROVIDED TO THE CENTRAL PLANNING COMMITTEES
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APPENDIX H

REFERENCES PROVIDED TO
PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

REFERENCES PROVIDED TO PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

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